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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/463,494	07/25/2000	MANFRED T. REETZ	STUDIEN-268-	6396

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04/07/2003

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EXAMINER

PATTERSON, CHARLES L JR

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1652

DATE MAILED: 04/07/2003

23

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/463,494

Applicant(s)

REETZ ET AL.

Examiner

Charles L. Patterson, Jr.

Art Unit

1652

-- Th MAILING DATE of this communication appears on th cover sheet with the correspond nce address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 January 2003 and 07 January 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 39-41 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 39-41 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 07 January 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

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Claim 39 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 39 is indefinite in the recitation of "optionally" on line 18. This rejection was made for the same term in claim 36 in the previous action. It is unclear whether the limitation is meant to be limiting on the claim or simply illustrative. Just because the examiner referred to this optional step in the previous 35 USC § 112 first paragraph rejection does not indicate that the term is not indefinite.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 39-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mannesse, et al. (U-1) in view of either Williams, et al. (A), Zhou, et al. (U), Leung, et al. (V), Cadwell, et al. (W) or Shinkai, et al. (X).

Mannesse, et al. teach the value of mutating hydrolase genes to study stereoselectivity. The five secondary reference have been characterized in the previous action. Basically they teach generating mutations in genes using PCR methods, as in step b) of claim 39. Applicants have admitted on page 9 of their remarks that these methods are acknowledged in the specification to be prior art. Since Mannesse, et al teach that mutations have value in studying stereospecificity, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to obtain the mutants by the methods taught by the secondary

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references and to use them to study stereoselectivity. The exact mutation rate in PCR or whether or not more than one round of PCR mutation is done is a matter of design choice and would have been obvious, absent unexpected results.

Claims 39-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mannesse, et al. (U-1) in view of either of Stemmer (V-1) or Zhang, et al. (W-1). Mannesse, et al is characterized *supra*. Stemmer and Zhang, et al. teach using the method of part c) of claim 39 to mutate a gene. Essentially it involves digesting the gene with DNase I and reassembling the fragments. Since Mannesse, et al teach that mutations have value in studying stereospecificity, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to obtain the mutants by the methods taught by Stemmer or Zhang, et al. and to use them to study stereoselectivity. The exact mutation rate in PCR or whether or not more than one round of PCR mutation is done is a matter of design choice and would have been obvious, absent unexpected results.

Copies of the Stemmer and Zhang, et al. references are not being sent because they were cited in the PCT search report.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Charles L. Patterson, Jr., PhD, whose telephone number is 703-308-1834. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 7:30-4:00.

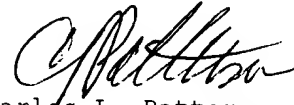
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ponnathapura Achutamurthy can be reached on 703-308-3804. The fax phone number is 703-305-74014242.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0196.



Charles L. Patterson, Jr.
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1652

Patterson
April 3, 2003